

723 military power of Coorgs with their lack of certain rituals and their somewhat catholic dietary. It is interesting to note that Shri N. Chinnappa considers the account of the origin of Coorgs given in the Kāvēri Myth to be a true, historical account. He, however, mentions that the majority of Coorgs regard themselves as Kahatriyas and not as Ugras.¹

34 Coorgs seem to be a distinct community in occupation of the forested mountains of Coorg for many centuries, and with a way of life of their own. But they were throughout in contact with [17] Sanskritic Hinduism, and religious movements like Lingāyatism affected them considerably.

[62] There are two subdivisions among Coorgs today: the first division is 41,026 strong, while the second contains only 666 individuals, according to the 1941 Census. Members of the latter division are called Amma Koḍagas, or Amma Coorgs, and they are highly Brahminized in their customs and ritual. They are vegetarians and teetotallers, and nowadays they constitute an endogamous [291] unit. Like the Brahmins they wear the sacred thread and observe [74] annual *shrāddhas* or ancestor-feasts at which only vegetarian food is offered to the dead ancestors.

584 It is said that Amma Coorgs are the descendants of a Coorg man and a Brahmin girl of Wynād, daughter of one Tāyikāṭ Tambiran, who expelled his daughter from his home as she attained puberty before marriage. (Formerly, among Brahmins, it was regarded as both sinful and shameful to have in the house an unmarried girl who had attained puberty.) This girl married a Coorg, and her descendants came to be known as Amma Coorgs (*amma* = mother), and they observed the customs of their mother. The name of an [104] Amma Coorg man has the suffix '*amma*' even though '*amma*' means 'mother', and is normally a suffix to a woman's name in certain parts of south India. In Coorg, a woman's name has the suffix '*avva*' which is the same as '*amma*', and a man's name has the suffix '*appa*' which means 'father'. It is said that formerly Amma Coorgs, who were concentrated in south Coorg, used to claim kinship with a similar group of people in Wynād.

584 In the last few years of the reign of the last Rāja of Coorg, Amma Coorgs claimed to be 'Kāvēri Brahmins', the descendants of the Brahmin disciples of the sage Agastya, husband of Kāvēri, before the latter flowed away as a river. The disciples twitted the master

¹ *Paṭṭolē Palumē*, pp. 19-20.

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with having deserted Kāvēri for Kanaké, a semi-divine woman, who later assumed the form of a river, joining the Kāvēri at Bhāga-mandla. This annoyed Agastya who cursed his disciples, 'Brahmins of Matsyadēsha [traditional name for Coorg in the Sanskritic myths], let not the people of this land obey you. Let them not give you enough to support you.' The distressed disciples appealed to Mother Kāvēri against her husband's curse. She took pity on them and told them that so long as they believed in her they would not find it difficult to support themselves. 564 173

In November 1834 some Amma Coorgs donned the sacred thread at Balmuri on the banks of the Kāvēri. They became followers of the Brahmin monastery (*maṭha*) in Rāmachandrapura in Shimoga District in Mysore State. In 1847 the head of this monastery sent them instructions as to the ritual they were entitled to perform. Amma Coorgs from Kiggaṭnāḍ who had not donned the sacred thread in 1834 did so a few years later at the Irpu temple under the auspices of the Brahmin monastery at Kānūr in Uḍipi in South Canara. Sometime afterwards a few Amma Coorgs who still remained unattached to a monastery became disciples of the monastery at Subramanya in South Canara.¹ 564 792

Amma Coorgs exemplify a tendency which has always been present in the caste system: a small group of people break off from a larger whole of which they are a part, Sanskritize their customs and ritual, and achieve a higher status than their parent-body in the course of a few decades. 564 [178]

The main body of Coorgs do not contain any subdivisions today, but formerly, during the time of the Rājas, they were divided into two groups called 'Saṇṇa' and 'Malla' Coorgs. These are Kannaḍa, and not Koḍagi, terms, and elderly informants say that these terms were used only by the Kannaḍa-speaking outsiders and not by Coorgs themselves. This sounds somewhat far-fetched, though there does not seem to have been a sharp line dividing the Saṇṇa and Malla Coorgs. 'Saṇṇa' in Kannaḍa means 'small', and 'Malla' means 'big', and the terms were derived from the two different varieties of rice, one big and the other small. The latter variety is superior to the former, and Saṇṇa Coorgs regarded themselves as superior to Malla Coorgs.

Richter tells us that 'Saṇṇa Coorgs may originally have formed a small nucleus connected with their Nāyakas or chiefs who were 564 174

¹ N. Chinnappa, *Paṭṭolē Paḷumē*, pp. 20-21.

THE CULTS OF THE LARGER SOCIAL UNITS 209

779 touches Sanskritic ritual idiom at several points. There is also the
63y classic instance of Kaliyāṇḍa Ponnappa (alias Ajjappa), the fighter, magician, and doctor, whose apotheosized spirit is now-days worshipped by Coorgs in every part of Coorg.

769 The story of Kaliyāṇḍa Ponnappa is not entirely fictitious, but
173 has a basis of fact. He was a descendant of the Kaliyāṇ *okka* in Kunjala village in Nālknāḍ, and very early in his life he seems to have gone to Malabar to study medicine and magic. After his return to Kunjala he became famous for his magical powers: he was said to have under his control the 'ten spirits of the underworld' (*ṭattu kūṭ pātāḷa*) which did what he wanted them to do. He was also a fighter, and he actually died while fighting the soldiers of Karaṇembāhu, the chief of Bhāgamaṇḍlanāḍ at that time. His friend and companion Boḷtu committed suicide after Ponnappa's death.

The spirit of Ponnappa caused headache in everyone. A famous magician was sent for and he had the spirits of Ponnappa and Boḷtu and the 'ten spirits of the underworld' imprisoned in a conch-shell. The conch-shell was buried under a stone in Malabar. But some time later an accident released the spirits from the conch-shell, and subsequently the spirits of Ponnappa and Boḷtu, and their common friend Kuṭṭapāla Māyila, all found shelter in the well-known temple of Sārtāvu (Ayyappa) of Makki.

[79] Ponnappa and his companions have found shelter in several temples in south-west Coorg. There are Ponnappa's oracles everywhere in Coorg Proper, but none may practise as an oracle unless he has been authorized by the chief oracle of Ponnappa in Makki.

[78] People in every part of Coorg vow to make offerings to Ponnappa when they are suffering from bodily aches. It is believed that Sārtāvu (Ayyappa) has conferred on Ponnappa the power to cure aches. There is an annual festival in honour of Ponnappa at the Sārtāvu temple in Makki.

769 Educated Coorgs point out that Ponnappa is not a deity, but
776 only the very powerful spirit of a great magician and doctor who, in addition, died while fighting. The spirit of Ponnappa was, to begin with, guilty of anti-social conduct, giving headaches to everyone. That was the reason for its imprisonment in a conch-shell. After its release, it sought and obtained the protection of Sārtāvu of Makki. It then no more caused headaches, but cured them instead. It was subordinated to a well-known deity before being worshipped.

INTRODUCTION

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solitary or in groups, in some cases forming regular rows. The relics found in them are peculiarly shaped pottery, buried in the earth that nearly fills the chambers. The vessels contain earth, sand, bones, iron spear-heads and beads. The pottery consists of chatties and urns of burnt clay and is of a lead or black colour. They are smooth and shining and can hardly be said to be glazed. Bones, ashes and bits of charcoal are usually found at the bottom of the urns; grains of rice have also been found inside the chambers. Beads of red cornelian of a cylindrical shape are occasionally met with in the smaller pottery. The iron implements, spears, and arrow heads are very much corroded so that their shape is hardly distinguishable. These cairns apparently were the resting places of the earthly remains of a generation that existed anterior to the historical records of the present local races. The dolmens are also called pandukuzhies or dwellings of the Pandus by the Coorgs.

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Traditional History

The early history of Coorg is based primarily on Puranic legends and surmises covering a period of over ten centuries. The three names, Brahmakshetra, Matsyadesa and Kroda-Desa are applied to Coorg. The Puranic account is found in the *Cauvery Mahatmya*. It describes the origin of the Cauvery, and the place from which it arises.

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According to *Cauvery Mahatmya*, the Coorgs are Ugres by descent, that is the offspring of a Kshatriya father and a Sudra mother. The Kshatriya was a Kadamba prince of the Matsya country and known as Chandravarma. He was very religious by nature, and after a long pilgrimage to holy shrines in the south he came to Brahmagiri and propitiated the Goddess Parvati, who bestowed on him a kingdom there and provided him with a Sudra wife by whom he had eleven sons. She also promised to bless the country by appearing in it as the river Cauvery. The sons brought up as Kshatriyas in their turn obtained as wives the three hundred daughters born of Sudra mothers to the king of Viderba (Berar). Chandravarma having crowned his eldest son Devakanta as successor, took leave of him, predicting that Cauvery would soon appear as the river. These sons had more than a hundred sons each, and they spread themselves all over the country. This tearing up of the ground was like the work of boars, and the country was therefore called Kroda-Desa or boar-country from which arose the name Kodagu.

There is another popular legend which throws some light on the early history of the Coorgs. In former times there lived in Malabar six brothers and a sister. Five of them accompanied by their sister, Ponnamalathamma, went to Coorg by the Peditoreghat. While they were on the road, four of them said, "How is it that our sister comes with us?"

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- 173 The people will say that she is our wife." One of them replied, "If she comes with us, we will spoil her caste." When they came to Chouripade hill near the Kakabi river, they felt hungry. Then Ihattappa asked her (the sister) to prepare some food. She replied that there was neither rice nor fire. Ihattappa said, "I will give you rice, but you must eat it without salt". The brothers agreed to this. Then she saw a cow, which belonged to the Paradandra house, and she milked her, allowing the milk to fall into an earthen pot full of rice. While her brothers were sleeping in the shade of a tree, she went to the bank of the river and buried the pot in the sand, when it began to boil. She then summoned her brothers to partake of the rice she had prepared. When they had partaken enough, Ihattappa took some rice, threw it into the air and exclaimed, "See how the hail is descending from this sky." The sister was incensed at this act. She took a wooden ladle, gave him a heavy blow, and said, "See how the thunder breaks in the monsoon." The other brothers then laughed at this. While they were sitting together chewing betel, Palurappa said, "Let us see whose betel is reddest." All spat out the betel in their hand, pretending that they were throwing it again into their mouth and chewing. Deluded by this act, the sister threw the betel into her mouth and began to chew. They then declared that she had lost her caste. This decision was confirmed by their brother in Malabar to whom they appealed. Their sister felt very sorry and wept very bitterly. Ihattappa then threw an arrow from Ihattappabetta and directed his sister to follow the direction of the arrow and stay where it fell. Assuming the shape of a crane, she flew towards Ponnangala. Some Holeyas were working in paddy fields near Karathendra house. She flew upon one of them who became possessed with the devil and ran towards the tree to which the arrow had stuck. The brothers separated into different villages where they settled down. The whole family was afterwards worshipped as gods. Beyturappa had a temple at Beytur in Malabar. The third has one in Malatambira forest in Chomamale in Coorg, the fourth on the Ihattappa hill near Kunjila, the fifth at Palur in Kuyangarinad, and the sixth Tirnalli-Timmeys at Tirnally in Wynad. A temple was built for Ponnangalamma round the tree where the arrow struck. At her annual feast in April, she weeps and is worshipped by the Holeyas. The arrow is seen sticking to the wild mango tree to this day.

174 The foregoing traditional accounts go to show that the Coorgs
173 belong to the Ugra race and are the descendants of prince Chandravarma. The first colonists are made out to have migrated from the Kadamba kingdom. Lewis Rice says that it is a conclusion as well consistent with what is known of the Kadamba history as corroborated by the modern annals of Coorg, and with the fact that every dynasty of its Rajas derived their origin from the same region. There are also other traditions which lend

YERAVA

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support to the same view. They are narrated in the tales of the adventures of Chandrasekara and Chitrasekara, as expounded by Professor Wilson. They point to the fact that the kins of Jamcha and Coorj were of the same race. It is also observed that the aborigines as represented by the Holeyas were their forerunners in Coorj.

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Population

The population of Coorj is composed of the following tribes and castes:—

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1. Yerava
2. Kurnba
3. Mal Kudiya
4. Holeyas
5. Coorj
6. Bant
7. Gauda
8. Heggade
9. Vokkaliga

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[p.p. 8-37 have not been processed]

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CHAPTER XI

AMMA COORG

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[162] THE Amma Coorgs belong to the indigenous priesthood of Coorg. They numbered 666 in the Census of 1931, 336 being males and 330 females. Their [776] common name is Amma Kodaga, which would naturally signify Coorgs devoted to the worship of Amma or the goddess of the chief river of the country, the Cauvery. The Brahmans invented a mythical origin which is not in accord with the Cauvery Purana.

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As reward for his austerities the sage Kavera was blessed with a daughter, Kaveri, who was proposed to be given in marriage to Agastya, another sage who resided on the Brahmagiri. Kaveri did not accept the proposal. She assumed the shape of a river and fled from the mountain. Agastya in hot pursuit overtook her at Kadianad and persuaded her to submit their dispute to the arbitration of their friends. They called three families of Amma Kodagas and six of Coorgs. The former sided with Agastya and the latter with Kaveri. The Amma Kodagas decided that Kaveri should not be allowed to go. The Coorgs said that a woman should not be forced to marry against her will. This provoked Agastya, who pronounced a curse that the generation of Coorgs should become less, that their women should not tie their garments in front, that the sown rice should not grow, and that their cows should not give milk. But Kaveri Amma who was the patroness of the Coorgs counteracted the curse as well as she could, and said, "The Coorgs shall increase, but the Amma Coorgs decrease, the Coorg women shall tie their garments behind; the sown paddy shall be transplanted, the cows shall be milked after the calves have drunk". So saying, she tried to escape and on being held by Agastya by the border of her garment, she turned to the right and flowed rapidly away. Hence the place where this occurred is called Balamuri (turning to the right). A linga was erected at the spot by the Brahmans. It is yearly visited in the month of November at the time of the Kaveri feast by Coorgs and others, who bathe in the river. Dodda Vira Rajendrar built here a rest-house, which, though built a century ago, is in tolerable preservation. Nothing more is known about the real history of the Amma Coorgs, but a few facts may be given as evidence that they are the remains of an ancient priesthood.

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The Amma Coorgs observe in common with the Coorgs the great festivals of the country, and act as priests. They dress like Coorgs and at the same time wear the holy thread. It seems that they inclined towards the

AMMA COORG

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professed patronage of the Brahmans and that they gradually dropped into brahmanical habits of life and thought. A good many now wear the holy thread, and all profess to abstain from meat and fermented liquors. The return to Brahman initiation and dress was brought about by a Haviṣa Brahman whose family exercised spiritual influence over the Amma Kodahas. They are still unlettered. There is a tradition current among them that in former times one half of Coorg belonged to the Ammas, and the rest to the Coorgs. The Ammas by virtue of their priesthood held their land free of rent. Their lands are even now very lightly taxed.

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Internal Structure

The Amma Coorgs form a homogeneous community. There are two gotras among them, the Baradwaja gotra and Viswamitra gotra. They marry within the same gotra.

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Marriage Customs and Ceremonies

The Amma Coorgs do not intermarry with the Coorgs, but the separation may be of recent origin. Marriage settlement is made only after the agreement of horoscopes. The young man's father, uncle, and other close relations assemble, when coconuts, plantains, and betel leaves are handed to the bride in token of settlement. The auspicious day for celebration is fixed to send invitations to the relatives on both sides. The dress and ornaments to be given to the bride are also settled. The preliminary formalities that are gone through are:—

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1. The boy's party going to the house of the bride.
2. Their welcome with refreshments.
3. Nischithambulam.

The essential formalities are mukadarsana, and garlanding and panjārahana, tali-tying, presenting the bride with the wedding dress and ornaments, and feasting. There is no homam as among the Coorgs, but there exists the cutting of plantains in common with the Coorgs. On the arrival of the bride at the bridegroom's house, she puts rice on the lamp. On the third day they bathe, and celebrate the sobhanaprasta, if the girl has attained puberty already.

Pregnancy and Childbirth

When a girl becomes pregnant, pumsavana and simantha are performed. When she is about to become a mother, she is confined to a separate room. Her mother or some aged woman acts as midwife. Pollution lasts for eleven days after which she bathes to become pure. But it is only after 40 days that ganḡa puja is performed, when she bathes and becomes pure. Only then can she enter the kitchen. Cradling the baby takes place on the eleventh day. The naming ceremony takes place the same day.

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A Coorg woman is rarely idle, her busy hands find always some work to do, and no wonder, if we consider the life and bustle of a Coorg house with its 40, 60, or 80 and more inmates. Two or three generations, grandfather and grandmother, their sons and daughters-in-law and the children of these families all live and mess together. The labourers also belong to the household and look up to the mistress for food and orders. The fattening of the pigs, the milking of the cows, the water supply for the house, these and many other cares are under the immediate supervision of the mistress. Where peace and harmony exist, a Coorg house presents a patriarchal life indeed, but the idyllic picture is too often marred by discord occasioned by the harsh régime of an imperious mother-in-law, by the jealousy and heartburnings of married brothers, or the more material questions of family income and individual claims. The master or yejamána, who is always the senior male member of the house, has no easy position, especially in our days, when a tendency to break up these large houses clearly manifests itself. But Coorg women of a commanding spirit and superior character are often heard of who, like Abigail of old, with tact and wisdom subdue the unruly elements of this bustling human beehive and make the residents subservient to the common weal and honour of the family. Here is a story to the purpose:—Six generations ago, there was a woman called Doddi Auwa¹ the great lady—who lived at Almanda house, in the village of Arméri, which belongs to Boppunádu. She was the mistress of the Almanda property, being the only child of rich parents. She was a woman of extraordinary size and strength of body. Nor was she less distinguished by qualities of mind and character. Throughout the country she was known as the wisest, the richest, the strongest of Coorg women. Independent owner of a Coorg estate, she was at liberty to choose a husband for herself. Her choice fell upon a man of the same clan, Uttā-¹ [Errata: This should read "Dadda-Auwa," see corrigenda, Cat. II, p. 493 -- Analyst]

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592 cha, a son of the Mánanda house. He was a good sort of
 562 a husband, but much inferior every way to his great wife.
 • 173 Perhaps she had chosen him for this very reason. His place
 in the house was rather that of head-servant, than of husband
 and master. Every year the people of Arméri used to send
 a caravan to Irkúr, in the low country, near Cannanore, to
 fetch salt. At other times caravans, carrying rice to the
 coast, would start from Arméri during the dry season. On
 such occasions Doddi Auwa² would herself attend to every
 thing, put the cattle in readiness, prepare provisions, and at
 last accompany her husband and his oxen to the place of meet-
 ing, appointed for the whole train from the village. On part-
 ing, she would recommend her husband and his beasts to the
 kind offices of the best men in the caravan, and return home
 to her great house and her large business. Often, when hus-
 band or servants appeared too slow in loading the oxen, she
 would bid them step aside and taking the double sacks quietly
 with both hands, lay them softly and evenly upon the backs
 of the cattle. She was famed equally for wisdom and honesty.

Also Mudduráya who ruled Coorg in her time, respected
 and revered her, and often, on coming to Beppunádu, he
 stopped to have a talk with Doddi Auwa² of Almanda house.
 In the course of time Doddi Auwa² became mother of four
 daughters, but to her great grief no son was granted her, to
 succeed to the Almanda property. When the daughters came
 of age, she gave them in marriage to sons of neighbouring
 landholders. The eldest became the wife of a member of the
 Pálekanda family, the second married into the Pálanda house,
 the third was given to the Amnichanda family. The young-
 est, by a general agreement of the chiefs, was also given to
 the Pálekanda house, but, as heiress of the Almanda property,
 she had to give her sons, if she bore any, to her mother. This
 daughter, the youngest, bore 4 sons in succession. Of these,
 the two eldest were brought up by their grand-mother Doddi

^{1 2 3}
 A, A, A [Errata: This should read "Doddi-Auwa".
 See Corrigenda, Cat. 116, p. 493 -- Analyst]

¹
Auwa at Almunda. The name of one was Timmaya, that of the other Máchu. Máchu had a son Ayappa whose son was Bollu, the father of Stephanas, the first Coorg Christian."

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The culinary art of the Coorg women is not much appreciated by a European palate, which relishes less hot condiments and a more sparing use of oil and ghee. Meat, whether game, pork, mutton, fowl or fish is cut into small pieces irrespective of joints and made into a nourishing savoury curry, which, with a dish of boiled rice, seasoned with mango, lime, citron and Ambatti-pickle, makes to native taste an excellent meal. The Coorg women excel in preparing a great variety of pickle and chutney, also sweet preserves and sweetmeats. Their appams or nradóshe are relished even by Europeans. The kitchens of the Coorgs, which are inside the house, are remarkable for the cleanliness of the cooking-vessels in use.

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The Coorgs generally take an early meal at 7 of rice-conjee seasoned with pickle or curda. At 10 they partake of a more substantial breakfast, consisting of boiled rice and curry. At 3 o'clock again conjee is taken as in the morning, and in the evening a hearty supper of boiled rice with vegetable or meat-curry and other condiments. Toddy of the *Baine-mara* (*Caryota urens*), also a kind of beer made of fermented rice, rice-brandy and arrack are the usual beverages, but lately the strongest European liquors have become only too familiar to the Coorgs at all hours of the day.

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As is the custom with other Hindus, the Coorg women attend upon their lords and the male members of the house, before they sit down to their own separate meal. This selfish and unmanly custom greatly detracts from the charm of family life. The meals spread on brass plates, on low stools, are rather animal feeds than family gatherings round the social table.

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The Coorgs are very hospitable; no beggar goes away empty from their houses. A visit from Europeans is looked

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^ [Errata: This should read "Daddi - Auwa" see corrigenda, Cat. 116, p. 493 -- Analyst]

3. SOCIAL LIFE OF THE COORGs.

a. The Coorg house.

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The Coorg houses are generally situated close to their paddy-fields on a sheltering slope of Bane land, surrounded by clumps of plantain trees, sago and betel-nut palms and other fruit-bearing trees. A coffee garden and a small plot for the growth of native vegetables are seldom absent, and, where the locality is favourable, a little tank well stocked with fish is not uncommon. The position, the style of building and the approaches of old Coorg houses strongly remind one of small fortifications, and tradition points back to a time of general feuds, when chief fought with chief, clan with clan. In the deep cadangas or ditches with high banks, we still see memorials of that warlike state of affairs. These war-ditches intersect the mountainous districts in every direction, and resisted not only many a furious attack of contending parties, but also the force of the annual monsoon.

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A deeply cut passage, paved with rough stones and overgrown with shady trees, and the sloping side walls decked with a variety of luxuriant ferns, leads you in angular lines to the doorway, passing under an out-house. Over a paved courtyard, on three sides enclosed by stables, store-rooms and servants' quarters, you come to the front of the main building, which is a square of one story and raised about 3 feet above the ground. All the buildings are roofed with bamboos, and thatched with rice-straw. Considering that there is an open square hall in the centre of the house, called nadumane there remain the four sides only for habitable quarters. The front side however is reserved for an open verandah—the reception hall. Near to the right end the principal door leads to the inner rooms, which are all dark, opening only by a small door into the inner square, which is lit by the sky-light formed

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692 Superintendent, who has to get out of the difficulty as best he may. By the Panchayat's self-constituted authority the wizard, or the person who has employed sorcery against his enemy, must promise to abstain in future; and in many cases reparation of some kind or other is made. In the days of the Rajahs such crimes were often punished with death. The British Government cannot, of course, follow the precedent. By a matter of fact order (No. 32 of 1858) from the Honorable Court of Directors to the Government of India: "Such an offence as sorcery ought not to be recognised by any British tribunal. If a pretended sorcerer is accused of really injurious practices against the person or property of any one, he shall be tried for these practices and if found guilty punished accordingly and not for sorcery. The pretended exercise of supernatural powers should be in itself an offence and should be punished as a form of Fraud."

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[776] d. Substitutes for human sacrifices and other peculiar rites.

As among other Dravidian mountain-tribes, so also in Coorg, tradition relates, that human sacrifices were offered in former times, to secure favour of their *Grāma-Dévatās*: *Márimma*, *Durga* and *Bhadra-Káli*, the tutelary goddesses of the Sakti-line, who are supposed to protect the villages or *náds* from all evil influences. In *Kirindádu* and *Koninchéri-grāma* in *Katiedná*, once in three years, in December and June, a human sacrifice used to be brought to *Bhadra-Káli* and during the offering by the *Pánikas* the people exclaimed "Alamma!" (*Álu-amma* i. e. a man oh mother!) Once a devotee shouted: "Alallamma, ádu!" i. e. "not a man, oh mother, a goat," and since that time a he-goat without blemish has been sacrificed. Similarly in *Bellúr* in *Távaligherri-márnád* of *Kiggatná*-*ta'uq* once a year by turns from each house a man was sacrificed by cutting off his head at the temple; but

7 [Errata: This should read "the favour"
see Corrigenda, Cat. 116, p. 473 -- Analyst]

when the turn came to a certain house, the devoted victim made his escape into the jungle. The villagers, after an unsuccessful search, returned to the temple and said to the *pújári*: "Kalak-ádu" which has a double meaning viz. "Kalake," next year—"ádu," we will give, or "ádu", a goat: and thenceforth only scape-goats were offered. The devotees fast during the day. The he-goat is killed in the afternoon, the blood sprinkled upon a stone, and the flesh eaten. At night the Panikas dressed in red and white striped cotton cloths and their faces covered with metal or bark masks perform their demoniacal dances.

In Mercara-táluq in Ippanivolavádi and in Kádakéri in Hálerinád the villagers sacrifice a *kóna* or male-buffalo instead of a man. Tied to a tree in a gloomy grove near the temple, the beast is killed by a Méda who cuts off its head with a large knife, but no Coorgs are present at the time. The blood is spilled on a stone under a tree and the flesh eaten by the Médas.

In connection with this sacrifice there are peculiar dances performed by the Coorgs around the temple: the *Kombáta* or *horn-dance*, each man wearing the horns of a spotted deer or stag on his head; the *Piláda* or *peacocks'-feather-dance*, the performers being ornamented with peacocks' feathers, and the *Chauridáta* or *yák-tail-dance*, during which the dancers, keeping time, swing *yák* tails. These ornaments belong to the temple, where they are kept.

In some cases where a particular curse is said by the Kanya to rest upon a house, stable or field, which can only be removed by an extraordinary sacrifice, the ceremony performed seems to be another relic of human sacrifices. The Kanya sends for some of his fraternity, the Panikas or Bannas, and they set to work. A pit is dug in the middle room of the house, or in the yard, or the stable, or the field, as the occasion may require. Into this one of the magicians des-

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III. PART.

The History of Coorg.

1. THE LEGENDARY PERIOD OF THE KĀVĒRI-PURĀNA.

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The ancient annals of Coorg history are the Kāvéri-Purāna which forms an episode in 4 chapters (11—14) of the Skanda- or Kārtikēya-Purāna; but in a brahminical legend we must not look for the simple record of a popular tradition. The Brahmins, the creative minds of the old Indian literature, had it in their power to mould any original tradition into whatever shape they pleased for the furtherance of their own interests.

It has ever been their policy, as gods terrestrial, to lay claim to the whole Indian world, their great champion Parshurāma having presented to their Patriarch Kashiappa as a gift the conquered earth, the Jambudwīpa, after the defeat of the Kshetrias and the destruction of their 18 tribes. The primitive gods of the nations of Jambudwīpa or India were either turned into Avatāras of Vishnu or incorporated as Demons with the host of Siva, the high mountains were peopled with celebrated Rishis or hermits, and the mightiest and most fertilizing rivers brought into relationship with the principal brahminical deities. Ganga and Kāvéri fell to the lot of Siva; Krishna and Gōdāveri were sacred to Vishnu.

The Kāvéri-Purāna or Kāvéri-Mahātmya (glorification of Kāvéri) describes the sacred river from its source to its union

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 with the sea and enumerates the holy bathing places and the temples on its banks. The Purána had naturally to treat also of Coorg, where the Kávéri rises, and accomplished the task as it would best suit brahminical interests. This was no easy matter. We have seen, how ill the tough materials of the wild world of Coorg suited brahminical taste; how these illiterate and untamable hunters seem to have ever had an instinctive antipathy to, and thorough contempt for, the sanctities and pretensions of the smooth and crafty Brahmins and that these were not slow in returning the compliment has been described in former pages.

The author of the Kávéri-Mahátmya, of which a Canarese translation has been made in 1864 by Srínivásayengar at the desire and expense of the late Head Sheristadar, Biddianda Nanchappa, does not appear to have been very skilful; for anticipating no serious criticism he allowed his fancy to run away with his better judgment.

The story of the invisible river Sujyóti, joining the Kánake and Kávéri is a lame imitation of the northern tale, that Sarasvati, a stream of great renown among the Brahmins, is not lost, as it seems, in the desert sands, but joins the Ganges and the Jumna (Yamuna), unseen, at Prayága. The holy Sarasvati must have an end worthy of its sanctity. But here in the Kávéri-Purána the third, altogether invisible, stream Sujyóti is an idle fable introduced only to complete a southern trinity of holy rivers. The extraordinary anachronism of Párvati's blessing given to Chandravarma, the founder of the Coorg people, who is thereby rendered victorious over the Mlechas or Turks, who made their first appearance about 500 years ago, transgresses even the thoughtless audacity of a Purána; for the Purána belongs according to its own account to the age of the Rishis, who were long extinct, when the Turks appeared. The numerous passages, inculcating the duty of the valiant Coorgs, to offer to the Brahmins the honours

and gifts due to them, have met with singularly bad success. 538
 The Coorgs, it would appear, never troubled themselves much 173
 about the contents and the admonitions of the Kávéri book, 177
 and, though the translation of it was designed to make it
 accessible to them, it is so highly spiced with Sanscrit and old
 Canarese expressions, that few do understand it.

The Kávéri-Purána seeks to glorify the holy river. Its [823]
 divine origin, its connection with the Rishi Agastya, (the
 settler of the Vindhya-mountain-range, the great son of both
 Mitra and Varuna), and its course through the eastern country
 into the sea in obedience to the counsel of Agastya, all con-
 spire to give it a character of surpassing sanctity.

The seizure of the Amrita, the produce of the ocean-539
 churning by the Asuras, spread consternation and despair 177
 among the hosts of the gods. They invoked the great Vishnu,
 the lord of all. He had compassion on them. From him
 Mōhini emanated,—Lakshmi at the same time sending forth
 Lōpāmudre (a form of Pārvati),—charmed the Asuras by her
 transcendent beauty, and restored the drink of immortality
 to the gods. After having delivered the gods, she retired
 to Brahmagiri—where the sources of the Kávéri now are—and
 was changed into a rocky cave. Lōpāmudre was given to
 Brahma, who brought her up as his daughter. Thus ends
 the first act, the scene (true Purána fashion) being laid in the
 heavens. The second act passes to the earth. Kávéri Muni
 retires to Brahmagiri, there to give himself wholly to medi-
 tation on Brahma. He asks Brahma for children. Brahma—
 how could he refuse the prayer of his devout Rishi?—gives
 him Lōpāmudre for a daughter. She, in order to procure
 beatitude for her new father, resolves on becoming a river,
 pouring out blessings on the earth, and all the merits arising
 from this course of devoted goodness, are to be appropriated
 to Kávéri Muni. For this purpose she resorts to one of the
 heights of Brahmagiri and invokes Brahma, to give her the

you will find near the fountain of the Kávéri, a friend of my father Kavérarāya, who has for three lives worshipped me" ('three lives' does not here mean, father, son and grandson, but three actual lives of the same person, who worshipped Párvati until his death, and, when he was born again according to Hindu theory, spent his second life, and after that his third life, in the service of the goddess.) The Coorgs went and found him at the sources of the Kávéri. He taught them during a whole month, which they spent there, how to prepare food for their ancestors, and other holy rites. Since that day all the Coorgs assemble each year in the month of Tulá (October—November) to celebrate the great festival of their tribe in honour of Kávéri.

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2. POPULAR TRADITION.

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Disappointed by the extravagant brahminical legends regarding the origin and early history of the Coorgs, we naturally expect, that the Coorg bards, who in their Palanés so graphically and with truthful simplicity depict the domestic and social events of Coorg life, would with equal artlessness have preserved the early pages of their country's history; but Coorg shares in the general fate of primitive Indian history—the dark ages are left with hardly a ray of reassuring light. Coorg tradition has been supplanted by Brahminism and what information one is able to obtain is in most cases but a faint echo of the legends of the Kávéri Purāna or some other brahminical imposition. There is, however, one story free from this imputation, and it is of considerable value as it throws light on the origin of some of the Coorg deities, who are not the creations of brahminical fancy, though their shrines are now presided over by Brahmins. The story is taken from oral tradition, and runs thus:—In ancient times there lived in the Malabar country six brothers and a sister.

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539 Five of them, accompanied by their sister, Ponnangálatamma, went to Coorg by the Páditoraghát. While they were on the road, four of them said: "How is it that our sister comes with us; the people will say, that she is our wife?" One of them replied: "If she comes with us, we will spoil her caste." When they came to the Chouripadé-hill near the Kakabé river, they felt hungry. Then Iguttappa said to his sister: "Prepare us some food." She replied: "There is no fire nor rice." Iguttappa said: "I will give you rice, but you must boil it without fire." She replied: "I will boil it without fire, but you must eat it without salt." To this the brothers agreed. Then Ponnangálatamma, seeing a cow, which belonged to the Paradandra house went and milked her, letting the milk fall into a chatty full of rice, and while the brothers were sleeping in the shade of a tree, went to the bank of the river and buried the pot in the sand, where it began to boil. Then she called her brothers to eat the rice which she had prepared. When they had eaten enough, Iguttappa took some rice, threw it up into the air and exclaimed: "See how the hail is descending from the sky." Ponnangálatamma, angry at this, took a wooden ladle, gave him a heavy blow on his back and said: "See how the thunder breaks in the monsoon." Then the brothers all laughed at him. Afterwards, while they were sitting together and chewing betel, Páldrappa said: "Let us see whose betel is the reddest." Then they all spat out the betel into their hands, looked at it, and the brothers threw the betel behind their heads, pretending that they were throwing it again into their mouth and chewing. The sister, deluded by this, threw the betel into her mouth again, and went on chewing. They now said that she had lost her caste. Their brother in Malabar too, to whom they appealed, confirmed their decision. Ponnangálatamma was excessively grieved, and wept bitterly. Iguttappa afterwards threw an arrow from the Iguttappabetta and ordered his sister to go

with the arrow and stay where it fell. The arrow struck into a mango tree at Ponnangála in the village of Yawakkapádi. Ponnangálatamma, assuming the shape of a crane, flew towards Ponnangála. Near the Karatandra house some Holeyas were working in the paddy fields. Ponnangálatamma flew upon one of them, who became possessed with a devil, and ran towards the tree, in which the arrow was sticking. The brothers afterwards separated into different villages, where they settled. The whole family were afterwards worshipped as gods. Beytdrappa has a temple at Beytur in Malabar, the second in Taliparambu in Malabar, the third in the Maletambira forest in the Chómamale in Coorg, the fourth on the Iguttappa-hill near Kunjila, the fifth at Páldr in Kuyangérinád, the sixth, Tirnalli-Timmeya at Tirnally in the Wynad. A temple was also built for Ponnangálatamma round the tree, where the arrow had stuck. At her annual feast, in April, Ponnangálatamma weeps, and is worshipped by the Holeyas. The arrow is, up to the present day, seen sticking in the wild mango tree.

Regarding the ancient government of Coorg the popular tradition states, that the country was divided into 12 Kómbus (districts) and 35 Náds (subdivisions) ruled over by petty chiefs, called Náyakas who lived in constant feuds amongst themselves and gradually succumbed to the wily encroachments of the Háleri-Polygars about whom more anon.

3. CONJECTURES REGARDING THE ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY OF THE COORGS.

In the absence of any reliable records prior to the Mussulman historian Ferishta who at the end of the 16th century casually mentions, that Coorg was governed by its own princes, our conjectures regarding its history anterior to this period are but guesses at the truth, based upon collateral circum-

* 175 his subjects. But the Rājendranāme is studiously silent on these subjects. The book was written for the use of his friends and patrons. For this purpose the English translation was made, at the request of Vīrarāja by Mr. Abercromby, and Hindustani translations distributed as remembrances among the higher officers in the Company's service. Vīrarāja was anxious, more anxious than appears to have been natural in a person of his situation, to bear a fair character in the eyes of the English Sirkar. He seems to have been conscious, that to his own people he was an object of terror, probably of hatred, and that he had no friend on earth, but the English Government, whose gratitude he had indeed fully deserved.

The English translation of the Rājendranāme being available for further particulars, a succinct summary may suffice our present purpose.

A. PRINCES OF COLLATERAL LINES.

1633—1780.

a. *Muddurāja and his descendants.*

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173 The chronicle commences with the reign of Muddurāja who is introduced as the son of Appājirāja and the grandson of Vīrarāja. He reigned at Haléri in 1633, but subsequently established himself at Mercara, where he built the Fort and a Palace in 1681. He had three sons: Dodda-Vīrappa, Appājirāja and Nandarāja. After a long reign of 54 years Muddurāja died and his eldest son Dodda-Vīrappa succeeded him. The second son was settled at Haléri and the third at Hora-male.

Dodda-Vīrappa, with the harelip, had a son Appājirāja who married and had a son, whose name was Chikka-Vīrappa Vodeya.

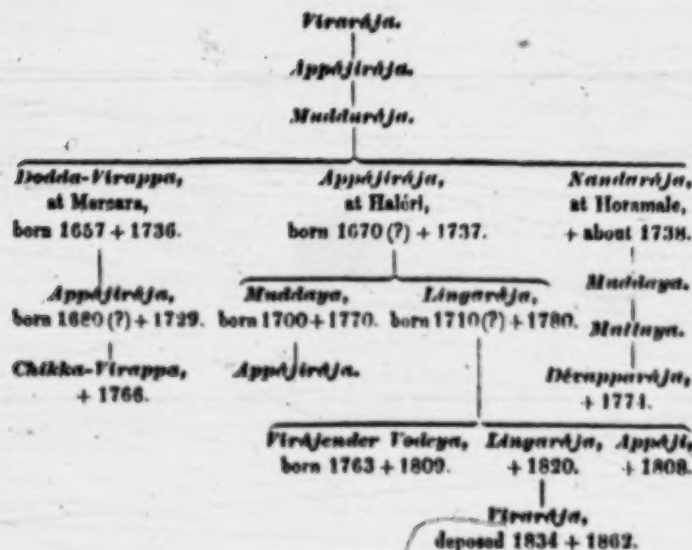
Appāji of Haléri had five sons of whom three died in early life. The eldest Muddaya had a son Appājirāja; the second

Lingaraja married Dēvambikegamma, who bore him a son at the full moon of June 1763, Virarājendra Vodeya, the author and hero of the Rājendranāme. His two brothers were Lingaraja and Appaji.

Of the Horamale branch Nandaraja had a son Muddaya whose son was Mallaya.

The relationship of the descendants of the different lines will appear more clearly from the annexed

Genealogical Tree.



Such was the state of things in Coorg, when Chikkadēva Vodeya of Mysore, Dodda Channaraja, the mother of Sōma-shēkara Nāyaka of Ikeri, Dodda-Sadāshivaraja of Sōle, Venkatādri Nāyaka of Bēlur, Viravasuraja of Chirakal lived and ruled their respective principalities. The country of Periapatna and of Coorg were then one. The frontier of

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